

# Co-management

how does it work ?

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20-26 June 2009, Palić, Serbia

## Conference report

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The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Republic of Serbia, but the views of the Author and participants in the activities.

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WELCOME

CO-MANAGEMENT

"HOW DOES IT WORK?"

# Summary

Over the last few years co-management has become a popular concept though proven only to be used as a useful method of cooperation in very few examples. Still, based on more than one example, Council of Europe states tried and/or have been planning to base youth participation in decision making founded on this concept. Exact ways of putting co-management into practice remains unclear. However, practical question on how to develop concept implementation and structure that would serve equality, respect and democracy while involving young people in decision-making, have been arising.

This concept draw attention of the "All different - All equal" campaign in Serbia and during 2008 the training team realized a project through which the co-management concept was analyzed. A training module for local government and NGO representatives was developed and delivered in three regions of Serbia as a part of the national strategy implementation efforts. Beside this national experience, idea for this project derives from recent discussions of the campaign representatives and partners from the SEE region and Europe that clearly shows that wider understanding of the co-management concept, its' meaning, purpose and mechanisms has still been missing (i.e. working group on NGO and GO cooperation during Seminar on Youth Policy Development in SEE, Belgrade, 22-24 September 2008).

Therefore, All different - all equal Serbia in partnership with the Croatian Youth Network (Mreža mladih Hrvatske), the Forum MNE, Montenegro and the Association of Secondary school students in Bosnia and Herzegovina (ASuBiH) organised **the international**

**conference “Co-management: How does it work?”** with the aim to create an opportunity for a wider international group to examine this concept and propose recommendations for its’ further development. The Conference is realised with the support of European Youth Foundation (EYF) of Council of Europe and Ministry of Youth and Sport of Republic of Serbia.

With the participation of 32 participants from Armenia, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Belgium, Croatia, Georgia, Lithuania, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, UN protected province Kosovo/a , the following key recommendations were drafted:

■ **Sustainability** of co-management practical application need to be ensured through *clear legal framework, long-term strategy across mandates, coordination with other processes/structures, regular evaluations, capacity building of members, clear budget lines for youth policy implementation and functioning of co-managed structure, institutionalized exchange of experiences through hand-over, internal procedures and policies, functional accountability mechanisms and recognition mechanism.*

■ **Indicators** of co-managed structure are difficult to be precise, however they should be related to: number, relevance and diversity of parties involved; *number and relevance of decisions made/meetings held; gender and age balance of members; level of implementation (achievements) of action plan; level of satisfaction of beneficiaries/members; level of interaction with base/beneficiaries and level of values and principles respected.*



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The Co-management concept need to be further promoted in order to be understood and applied. Following arguments can be used to promote the concept, towards:

- **The Governments:** Promotion of democratic values / EU and CoE standards in practice alongside gaining new (youth) perspective / inside on social issues; Eligibility/ possibility for additional funding; Creating image of Government that is closer to people and is mature politically to share and distribute the responsibility.
- **The Youth NGOs:** Gaining direct governmental support for youth policy development and implementation and at the same time ensuring transparency of governmental work; Increased credibility and legitimacy of youth NGOs (constituency, society, authorities); Possibility to create bigger influence and greater capacity to reach aims, while creating synergy and avoid overlapping; Access to resources (funds).







# Introduction

The All different - all equal Serbia in partnership with the Croatian Youth Network (Mreža mladih Hrvatske), the Forum MNE, Montenegro and the Association of Secondary school students in Bosnia and Herzegovina (ASuBiH) have organised **the international conference “Co-management: How does it work?”**. The objectives of the conference were to discuss and agree about main principles of the co-management concept, to improve participants' knowledge and skills for applying co-management, to identify and promote examples of good practices in implementing co-management concept, to learn about possible approaches of applying co-management and developing mechanisms for it and to articulate recommendations for future work and cooperation between participants in youth policy development field. The conference gathered 32 participants from 11 European countries. The program encompassed several methodological approaches creating a vivid combination of the experts lectures and workshop inputs, panel debates involving practitioners of the concept from European to the local level, as well as working groups, plenary discussions and educational games/simulations developing rights-based approach, and values and principles for applying co-management.

The conference was opened by Aleksandra Mitrović, representative of Ministry of Youth and Sport, who also read the letter from the Minister and by Bettina Schwarzmayer, former president of European Youth Forum. Following program was focused on: Co-management concepts and principles, Co-management as an element of good governance, Values and principles of Co-management, NGO representation mechanisms, Practical application of Co-management, Definition of Co-management.

# Co-management concept and principles

The inputs on this topic were given by several speakers addressing the co-management concept from different perspectives, namely European, Governmental and Non-Governmental.

**Bettina Schwarzmayer**, former president of European Youth Forum, was tackling the issue from the perspective of youth participation, stressing that youth must be involved at least at three identified levels: Legal, cultural and individual level. She introduced the stages of participation, coming to the concept of co-management where young people are not only consulted related to specific topic, but are the ones who are joining authorities in setting the agenda. Furthermore, she depicted co-management as shared responsibility of youth and authorities to go beyond setting agenda to delivering results.

The presentation also involved introduction to European Youth Forum – Largest Youth Organisations' Platform, and to Council of Europe Co-Management structure, where Joint Council has mandate to set policy objectives, but also to decide on budget issues of Directorate of Youth and Sport. Using this example Ms Schwarzmayer moved to discussing why the co-management is the concept to be argued for. Main argument she presented was the issue of youth voices being unheard as traditional democracy is failing to be “true” for youth.

The questions coming from the floor tackled the issues of lack of trust in youth being responsible vs maturity of politicians in giving away some of the power, as well as expertise of each young person on youth issues vs elitist youth participation in co-manage-

ment structures. However, main question raised by the discussion was related to the issue of ensuring *continuity of participation in co-management*.

**Aleksandra Mitrović**, representative of Ministry of Youth and Sport, presented this Ministry's approach to youth policy development and co-management. She gave overview of Ministry's activities and plans, stressing that the Ministry exist only for two years and that it was created on initiative of youth and youth organisations and with an aim of improving position of youth in Serbian society. The level of youth participation in development of youth policy was described as leadership of and membership in working groups (11 priority areas) alongside wide consultations (167 municipalities and more than 16000 young people involved). Next step was creation of local youth offices in 85 municipalities as joint effort of Ministry and Local Authorities. However, the challenge to continue implementing the co-management principle in implementing youth policy is based around the question of *representation of youth*. Namely, Ms Mitrovic stressed that Ministry struggles to create sustainable system and meets the obstacle in the fact that youth NGOs in Serbia do not have own platform that would ensure representation of youth. Still, not everything is on the side of civil sector, as Ms Mitrovic argued Ministry also needs to coordinate creation of Law on Youth, to strengthen the capacity of youth NGOs and support the projects that add to implementation of National Youth Policy, as well as to create legal framework for establishment of youth umbrella organisation. She also stressed that the challenge of overcoming the image of inactive youth needs to be seen as long-term process.

The questions from the floor raised the issues of visibility and accessibility to all youth of local youth offices, as well as the level of youth participation in the youth policy development and imple-

mentation. Youth are involved in Advisory Board – structure related directly to the Minister, where both young people and others are represented. Still, there is no young person in the Finance Commission, and mainly due to previously introduced issue of representation.

**Emina Buzinkić**, president of Croatian Youth Network (MMH/CYN), presented the NGO perspective on co-management on the case of Croatia. She stressed the importance of existing legislation followed by practical implementation. However, in terms of co-management the main challenge seems to be *application of the concept in practice*. The only success story is the Council on Civil Society Development involving on equal basis Governmental and Non-Governmental Organisations representatives (among those representative of youth NGOs involved). The Ministry of Family,



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War Veterans and Inter-Generational solidarity is based on the principle of solving social problems, therefore approach to youth is based on prevention of violence. Youth NGOs, through MMH/CYN, are striving for approach that would enable young people to put concrete issues forward, rather than focusing on need of Governmental side to share the power.

The plenary discussion was looking at identifying factors that prevent youth participation in the practice. This remained an open question for further consideration.

**Aleksandar Jovanović**, member of Advisory Council on Youth of Council of Europe's Directorate for Youth and Sport, gave more general overview of co-management concept and basic principles. He set the first formal definition of co-management as "specific form of youth participation that sets young people on equal level with their partners to work towards common goal". Mr. Jovanovic also introduced the key elements of co-management as being Emphasis on Equality, Becoming Equal Partner, Listen and Be Heard, Nothing About Us Without Us, Bridging Generational Gap, Esteem Building and Culture of Responsibility. Stressing that Co-management is a tool, and not the goal, Mr Jovanovic moved to widening the concept and its applicability in variety of settings. Joint element however needs to be common interest in order to engage in and invest in co-management.

Main challenge identified by Aleksandar lies in the field of *actively and structurally supporting young people (young members of co-management structure) to participate*, rather than just giving the chance for participation. The presentation also involved more detailed introduction to co-management structure in Council of Europe, DGIV.



## **Working groups outcomes**

Following on those inputs, the participants formed smaller working groups to discuss in more detail their own understanding and experience of Co-management. The conclusion that can be drawn from this part is that the group is very diverse in terms of both understanding and experience of co-management. The values and principles of co-management started appearing in those discussions setting the foundation for the further discussions and analyses of co-management.



# Co-management as an element of good governance

**Nikola Buković**, Program Assistant in Croatian Youth Network (MMH/CYN), defined co-management as an element of good-governance stating that main principles of good-governance are the same for co-management. Namely, accountability, openness (transparency), coherence and effectiveness, are all applicable for co-management, as visible in the following definition “co-management is a management procedure in which elders and young people share equal *responsibility* and decision-making *power* in relation to all aspects of *design, implementation, control* and *running* of a project or an organization”. Mr Bukovic, continued with identifying challenges for co-management from the Rational Choice Theory perspective, viewing a citizen or a decision maker in general as an egoistic, self serving creature. The main challenges are then *distribution and redistribution*, as well as the distinction between the two. Continuing in this direction Mr Bukovic offered the possible techniques to overcome such challenges in co-managed processes: a) arranging interaction; b) facilitating interaction; c) mediation and arbitration. However, crucial is to “do everything you can to change the nature of the game” making all the involved actors feel membership of the problem, so that they feel as a part of a solution. Finally, Mr Bukovic came to discussing the importance of co-management in the youth policy that is often, especially in transitional countries, a redistributive policy.

Questions from the floor raised issue of lack of analyzes and evidence that co-management is actually bringing results, as apart from structure of co-management in CoE there are hardly any other examples. Connected with this challenge the issue of accountability of involved parties have also emerged.

## Values and principles of Co-management

**Sever Džigurski**, All Different All Equal, Serbia, discussed the question of why values and principles are important for co-management. Defining “values and principles” as co-management software and its “structures and mechanisms” as hardware, Sever Džigurski further defined values and principles as foundations of our working platform. Apart from offering possible list of values and principles he emphasised that they need to be mutually agreed by all parties involved. The question he focused on was the challenge of *measuring and monitoring implementation of principles*, even with precondition of them being mutually agreed and precisely defined. The relation of values and principles in co-management was established with those in the concepts of participation, human rights, rights based approach and social inclusion, claiming that therefore they can be put in practice. The focus on values and principles in co-management is essential in order to balance different interests and to: have greater feeling of accomplishments; underpin commitment; assure quality; assure equal opportunities; achieve both process and product; empower all involved.

### Working groups outcomes

Working groups discussed the challenges of applying values and principles in co-managed structures and ensuring that it is according to good-governance principles. The two structures groups discussed were Pupils/Students Councils and Youth Co-Management Body<sup>1</sup> (at Municipal level).

Group “Pupils/Students Councils” identified following values and principles as crucial for establishment and functioning of such Council:

- motivation,
- responsibility,
- initiative,
- guidance,
- ability to impact school policy,
- independence of the Council,
- feedback and
- representativity.

The group was discussing challenges in relation to the identified values and principles, and they have presented the following list:

- lack of motivation in general,
- the teachers and management structure lack of acceptance of such Council,
- funding,
- poor coordination of Council,
- lack of experience and no exchange of good practices,
- capacity of Council built by external NGOs (work and experience is not recognised),
- legislation is often not consulted with pupils/students, but is imposed.

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<sup>1</sup> The terminology and philosophy behind “Youth Advisory Council”, “Advisory Board on Youth” etc differed so the term “Youth Co-managed Body” was used in descriptive manner to identify structure which is co-managed by youth and authorities in the framework of youth policy

Group “Youth Co-Management Body at Municipal level” worked on identifying obstacles in the phase of creation of such structure and the potential obstacles for its functioning. The result is following:

- identify youth needs – motivation, understanding co-management
- the system building – legislation, election criteria, transparency
- forming the committee – election criteria, competition, representativity, leadership
- setting up the agenda – strategy, common goals, transparency, consensus
- implementation – setting common goals, contact with constituency
- evaluation – indicators, external evaluation

Main points from discussing the findings of working groups were revolving around the issues of *representativity and accountability* of involved parties/individuals in co-management structures.



# NGO representation mechanisms

**Aleksandar Jovanovic**, gave an overview of the legislation directly dealing with youth and/or youth organisations using the examples of Finland, Latvia, Croatia and Serbia. Main points of the presentation were based on the questions of why and what should be defined by such legislation. The purpose of such legislation lies in the need to legally arrange and define the age group and kind of strategy/intervention directed towards it. However, the way this is done differs from case to case.

## Finland- Youth Act

Purpose of the Act is to support to young people's growing up and achieving independence through the promotion of **active participation, social empowerment** of young people and **improvement of social conditions and development**.

Basis for Act Implementation are **principles** of solidarity, equality, non-discrimination, multiculturalism and internationalism, healthy living and respect for the life itself and for the environment.

Act provides **definitions** for: youth, active citizenship, social empowerment, youth policy, youth work, national youth organization, national service organizations for youth work, organizations dealing with youth work.

Structure defined by the Act envisages **The Advisory Council for Youth Affairs and The Youth Organisations Subsidy Committee**, based on right of young people to participate in processes.



## Latvia- Youth Act

Areas of interest of the Act are **leisure time, non-formal education and volunteer work**.

Act provides **definitions** for: youth initiative group, specialist for youth work (issues), coordinator for youth work (issues).

Structure defined by the Act envisages **The Council for the Co-ordination of Youth Policy**, involving elected representatives of youth organisations.

## Croatia – Law on Youth Advisory Boards

Purpose of the Law is to define creation of the advisory boards, their area of work, process of the election of members and other relevant issues for the functioning of the board.

Area of work of the youth advisory boards are defined as: Participation in creation of local programs for youth activism and steering of the implementation, Cooperation with other advisory bodies for youth in Republic Croatia and abroad, Consulting with youth organisations about topics of the importance for young people, Cooperation with other bodies of local /regional authority.

## Serbia – Youth Act (the work on the Act starting in July 2009)

Purpose of the Law is to define youth councils, youth offices and youth centres, EU Youth in action programme agency, financial support of youth organizations and institutions, co-management.

Act will provide **definitions** for: youth, youth work, youth organization, youth umbrella organization.

**Gaja Bartusevičiūtė**, former president of Lithuanian Youth Council (LIJOT) and former vice-president of European Youth Forum, presented the youth policy in Lithuania as an example of practical application of co-management philosophy introduced by Council of Europe. In Lithuania, co-management is seen as mechanism

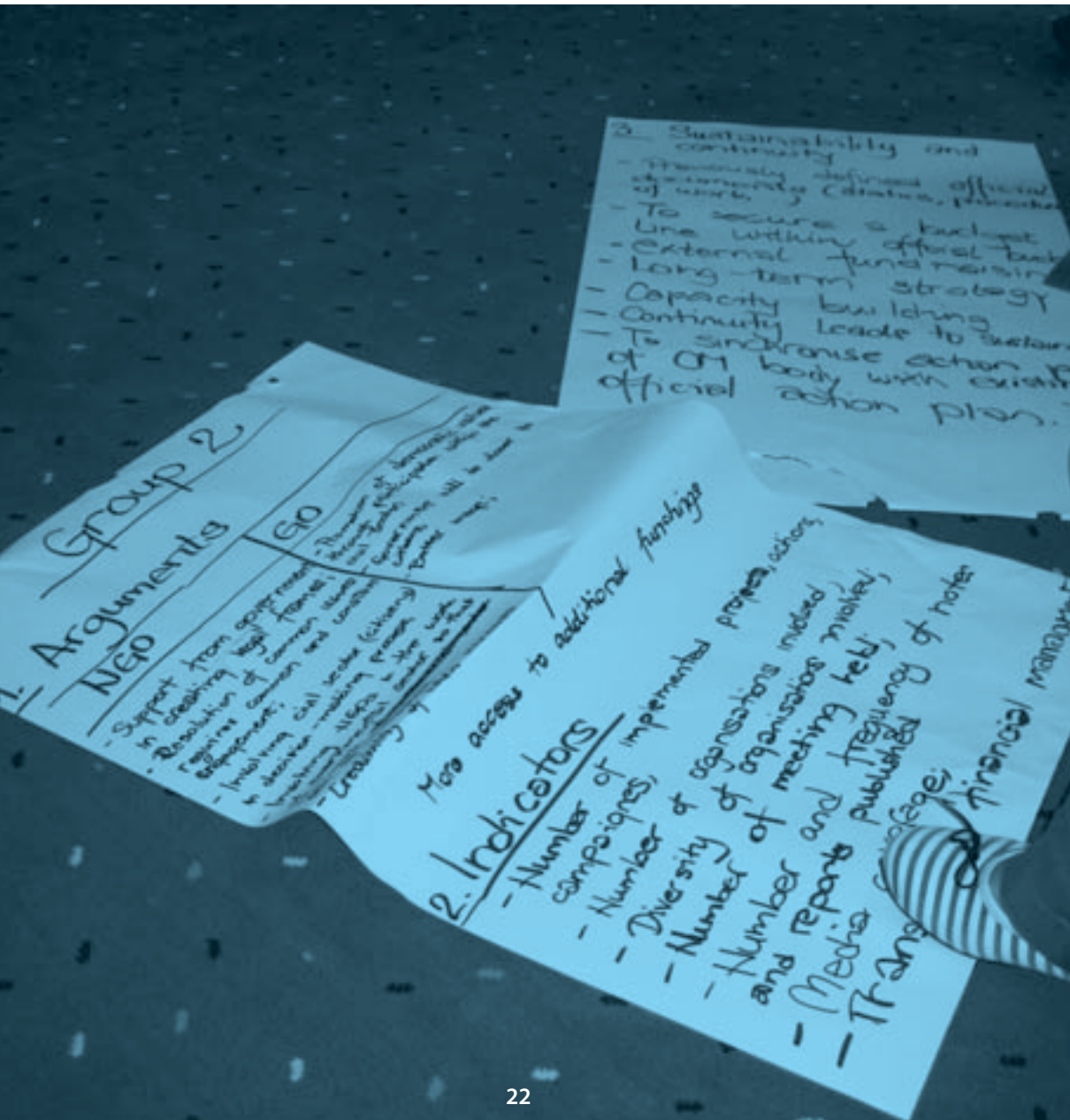
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that demands a mode of representation based on active youth organisations. Main principles of the implementation of youth policy are:

- 1) *parity* – state and municipal institutions and agencies as well as youth organisations are represented equally
- 2) *subsidiarity* – youth-related decisions must be made at a level at which they are most effective
- 3) *interdepartmental co-ordination* – when solving youth-related issues, state and municipal institutions and agencies communicate and co-operate with each other
- 4) *participation* – youth-related issues are solved with the participation of young people and by co-ordinating them with youth or representatives of youth organisations
- 5) *informing* – state and municipal institutions and agencies as well as youth organisations inform young people on the matters relevant to them in an acceptable and accessible form
- 6) *independence* – young people themselves choose a field of activities, set its purposes, take an active part in it and are responsible for the fulfilment of the said purposes
- 7) *voluntariness* – young people participate in a chosen field of activities of their own will and without pressure
- 8) *self-governance* – in their activity young people set down ways, forms, responsibility and evaluation of the implementation of the purposes of this activity
- 9) *communication and co-operation* – youth organisations of Lithuania communicate and co-operate with youth organisations of Lithuania and other countries, state and municipal institutions and agencies, other natural and legal persons.

However, she also presented change in the legislation that cut down the power of co-management structure, still not cancelling it, but significantly changing the scope of influence.



**Ante Martić**, Youth Work Development Policy Officer in European Youth Forum, has talked about NGO representation mechanisms at different levels and of different scope. Presenting the European Youth Forum and some of the National Youth Councils he gave an overview of variety of mechanisms existing. National Youth Councils as youth platform or umbrella organisation for youth organisations, are organised in different ways re: *membership* - from individual young person level to only organisations working at national level; *level of organisation* – municipality, only regional, to structures at state level; *mandate* – ensured by Law in some examples as opposed to decided by leadership in others. However, main point Mr. Martić was making is that such mechanisms need to be based on agreed principles otherwise their applicability is uncertain. Main principles he was underlining were that organisations involved in the structures need to be youth led, with young members and working on youth issues, that such structures need to be representative, democratic, transparent, accountable, independent and inclusive.

## Practical application of Co-management

Practical application of co-management was presented by four conference participants evoking discussion on the challenges and advantages of different approaches to them. Overarching issue setting the direction of further work was the issues of *sustainability of co-management*. Following are the summary of presentations and critical remarks made, as well as questions raised.

## **Example of Council for Youth - co-managed monitoring structure for national youth policy in Montenegro** *presented by Ajša Hadžibegović*

The presented model of Council for Youth was envisaged by the National Youth Action Plan (5 year strategy and 1<sup>st</sup> year operational plan) and as such it encompasses elements of co-management in terms of membership (6 members from NGOs and 5 from governmental institutions) and mandate (monitoring the process of implementation of NYAP and producing independent expert report). The identified challenges in practical application of such structure in this specific case, are:

- 1) selection criteria**, specially related to ensuring **youth representation** (lack of clear definition of youth NGO in Montenegro made it more difficult to have at least youth NGOs representatives if not also unorganised youth);
- 2) mandate and roles** of stakeholders (the Youth Policy changed from one Ministry to other creating administrative and ownership confusion and delay)
- 3) conditions for work** of the Council (the main issue pre-occupying the time and energy of Council was related to solving and creating adequate working conditions, including finances)

## **Example of different structures related to Youth Policy on different levels in Bosnia and Herzegovina** *presented by Bojana Sekulić*

The distinction was made between the different levels of administration and youth policy approaches stating the issue of non-consistent strategies. At the level of Bosnia and Herze-

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govina, the Youth Commission was formed to co-ordinate the process of Youth Policy, while at the level of Republic of Srpska, the Ministry for Youth and Sport exists and more legislation on the topic. As example of co-management the Youth Commission was explored in more details. However, the Youth Council of Republic of Srpska was discussed further more. Following issues were identified:

- 1) selection criteria and accountability of youth representatives** (the representatives of government were selecting the youth NGOs representatives to be members in the Youth Commission; The Youth Council of Republic of Srpska creates controlling committee that elects members for the Assembly that elects the Youth Council).

### **Example of process o development of Youth Policy on provincial level in Vojvodina, Serbia** *presented by Sever Džigurski*

The presented co-management model was Commission for implementation of youth policy consisting of 8+8 members and chaired by the Provincial Secretary for youth and sport. The main challenges and dilemmas that this body was facing were presented. Namely:

- 1) decision making power inside commission** (prevailing were those passionate about issues);
- 2) continuity of work** (the Youth Council (as umbrella organisation for youth NGOs) stopped functioning, bringing on the issues of expertise vs representation, the transfer of knowledge and commitment).



## **Example of the Youth Office in Becej Municipality** *presented by Vojislav Prkosovački*

The purpose and structure of Youth Office in Becej municipality was introduced. The Office has main task to promote youth work and thus main activity involved opening of youth club. Now, the Office is in the phase when they want to revise and restructure in order to implement co-management principles. However, the challenges for this specific local context are identified as follows:

- 1) representation** – due to low number of youth organisations;
- 2) defining and distinguishing between policy, strategy and plan** in the youth field – although youth policy as document doesn't exist it is alive in practice;

The conference participants formed working groups to discuss and identify the know-how of practical application of co-management. They were looking for answers on the identified challenges for establishing co-managed structure and for efficient functioning of such structure. In addition, facilitators asked for special attention to be put on the *Argumentation* to be used to explain the benefits of Co-Management; *Indicators* that need to be followed and monitored in order to apply Co-Management in practice and *Sustainability* of Co-Managed structures.



Priority issues	Solutions
<p><b>Legislation is not consulted with pupils/students/youth</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Wide participation</li> <li>▪ Legislative flexibility and thus sustainability (in line with the developments in the field &amp; practice)</li> <li>▪ Law on national level ensuring consistency at different levels</li> </ul>
<p><b>Lack of motivation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Raising awareness campaigns</li> <li>▪ Recognition mechanisms of their work and achievements</li> <li>▪ Stories of activism and good practices shared with focus on "What's gain?"</li> <li>▪ Motivating youth to motivate authorities</li> <li>▪ Research on youth needs</li> <li>▪ Alliance building</li> </ul>
<p><b>Lack of acceptance by decision makers</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Explaining the gains of youth activism</li> <li>▪ Identifying individuals with capacities to co-operate in developing co-managed structures</li> <li>▪ Recognition of their work</li> </ul>

Priority issues	Solutions
Election criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Shorter mandate still ensuring continuity (2-3 years with circulation mechanisms so that only few members are new each year)</li><li>▪ Trusting each “side” to choose own representatives</li><li>▪ Agree on competences of all members of co-managed structure:</li><li>▪ Young person (for youth representatives, not necessarily for authorities)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Active</li><li>▪ Experienced</li><li>▪ Dedicated</li><li>▪ Enthusiastic</li><li>▪ Knowledge of youth issues</li></ul></li><li>▪ All interested parties should be involved in deciding on representatives</li><li>▪ Strive for gender balanced and diversity of organisations/backgrounds</li></ul>

Priority issues	Solutions
Representativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Same number/equal representation</li> <li>▪ Diversity of organisations/ backgrounds</li> <li>▪ Involve youth from political parties (1 place they deciding on representative)</li> <li>▪ Involve youth that's not recognised (at least 1 place reserved for them)</li> <li>▪ Ensure that the possibility to get involved is used by young people of different backgrounds/from different organisations</li> </ul>
Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Info-sharing strategy involving media (building partnerships and capacity of media on the youth issues)</li> <li>▪ Minutes from the meetings publicly available and accessible</li> <li>▪ Publish budget for functioning of the co-managed body</li> <li>▪ Publish CVs of all members</li> <li>▪ Members need to share understanding that transparency is needed</li> <li>▪ Mechanism of monitoring the system to check achievements</li> <li>▪ Fair procedures available and accessible to everyone</li> <li>▪ Announced criteria and decision making procedures</li> </ul>

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Priority issues	Solutions
Coordination of process of creation of co-managed structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Create network – core activist leading group to start up process</li><li>▪ Get to know legislation (official and non-official procedures)</li><li>▪ Create strategy to start up co-management structure that would ensure youth policy implementation (who should be involved, how to involve them and how to inform/motivate others to join)</li></ul>
Lack of experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Continuity through know-how transfer</li></ul>

One of the outcomes of this work is the motto **“Nothing about co-management without co-managed process”**



# FINAL RECOMENDATIONS

## Sustainability

- Regular evaluations – discussions, external reports, public notes, target group feedback
- Capacity building of members
- Coordination with other bodies/processes
- Long-term strategy across mandates (clear mandate) in synergy and coordinated with other strategies
- Budget line for youth policy implementation
- Budget line for functioning of body
- Shorter mandate and continuity (at each moment some “new” and some “older” members)
- Institutionalized exchange of experiences through hand-over
- Legal framework
- (Internal) Documents regulating work of co-management structure
- Setting accountability mechanisms
- Equal access to information/sharing knowledge between all members
- Setting up recognition mechanism (keep motivation of members)

## Indicators

- Number, relevance and diversity of parties involved
- Number and relevance of decisions made/meetings held
- Gender and age balance of members
- Level of implementation (achievements) of action plan

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- Level of satisfaction of beneficiaries/members
- Level of interaction with base/beneficiaries
- Level of values and principles respected

### Arguments towards Governments

- Promotion of democratic values / EU and CoE standards
- New (youth) perspective / inside on social issues
- Eligibility/possibility for additional funding
- Image (closer to people)
- Distribution of responsibility?

### Arguments towards Youth NGOs

- Governmental support for youth policy development and implementation
- Credibility and legitimacy of youth NGOs increasing (constituency, society, authorities) + trust building
- Bigger influence (and greater capacity to reach aims)
- Create synergy and avoid overlapping
- Access to resources (funds)
- Ensuring transparency of governmental work

# Definition of Co-management

At the end, as final outcome of the conference there are new perspectives and attempts to define co-management in light of all findings from the conference. First dilemma addressed was related to defining co-management as process or concept, an idea or as tool, or only as structure. Here are some of the products:

- 1)** Co-management is decision making tool which unites capacities (resources) of young people and authorities in a way which ensures equal power distribution, responsibility, mutual trust and respect.
- 2)** Co-management is a process of collaboration between young people and elders based on equality. The main purpose is setting the common goals and making a strategy of implementing them.
- 3)** Co-management is an ideal concept in which people of all generations are cooperating in decision making and sharing responsibilities equally in order to make the group more productive. Both elders and youth support each other.
- 4)** Co-management is a process in which different actors (age, nationality, backgrounds...) share equal power and responsibility in decision-making process in order to achieve the common goal.
- 5)** Co-management is cooperation between government and young people that are equally represented and have equal shares of power.
- 6)** Co-management is common responsibility for implementation of policies created jointly.

# Way forward

The general conclusion of the conference is that co-management need to be further promoted in order to create greater understanding of its potential and achievements. This is necessary so that concrete lobbying and advocacy work towards creation of co-management structures (in youth policy field) can be done. Final stage would be the establishment of functional co-management structures for development, implementation and revision of youth policy. With the definitions explaining the core of co-management and recommendations providing concrete measures for applying co-management, first steps are taken. However, the conference participants shared ideas for future work in this area, with the guideline in mind that there is shared responsibility for follow-up . Some of those are:

- Stay in contact and share possible further ideas via e-group from prep phase and other tools available through internet.
- Organise similar conferences at national/local level.
- Develop training modules on the subject of co-management.
- Create publication on “what works in co-management and how”.



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